

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWNHAM CROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chedworth Street, Cambridge

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110658

Headteacher: Mr. P. M. Barraclough

Reporting inspector: Mr. Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 15th January to 18th January 2001

Inspection number: 192196

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chedworth Street Cambridge
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Appropriate authority:	Cambridgeshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. M. Donnelly
Date of previous inspection:	15 th July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils achievements What should the school do to improve further How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
9003	Bryan Findley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other activities
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	English Art Music Religious education Foundation stage	
22196	Janet MacPhee	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This average-sized primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven is situated in Newnham Croft on a spacious site in a residential area of Cambridge. The school's building is used for a community playgroup and an after school club. Many pupils are drawn from the families of visiting and Cambridge based academics and there are fewer children than average who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The number on roll has risen since the last inspection and is now 219 pupils (118 girls and 101 boys). At the time of the current inspection 34 children were in the foundation stage (the reception classes). Approximately a third of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and almost half receive support in some form for English as an additional language, a much higher proportion than the average. Many pupils return to their home countries or leave with their families to attend school abroad and do not therefore complete all of their primary education in the school; mobility is much higher than average. It is usual for only 40 per cent of the pupils who enrol at the age of four to sit the tests for eleven-year-olds; over the last two years half of those sitting the tests have been in school for less than two years. Thirty-seven pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs including seven who receive outside support; these numbers are below the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies widely but overall is broadly average. Seven of the nine teachers, including the headteacher and senior managers, have taken up their posts since the beginning of last academic year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school. The quality of teaching is good, leadership and management are very strong and standards are above or well above average in the basic subjects of English, mathematics and science. Attitudes and behaviour are good and the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in English and science is above average and in mathematics well above average by the time pupils are eleven.
- Overall, teaching is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good.
- The curriculum is good and improving.
- The provision for social and cultural development is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology are below average.
- Teachers' use of marking and other daily assessments to set suitable tasks for pupils of all ability levels, other than in mathematics
- Presentation and the careless use of spelling and punctuation in day-to-day work.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected and removed from special measures in July 1998, a good rate of improvement¹ has been maintained. Of the five issues identified at that time, good progress has been made in four. Though there have been improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) standards are still too low. Since the appointment of new staff the quality of teaching has improved considerably and, as a consequence, the rate of learning in lessons has increased. The school has a well-focussed improvement plan and is aware of the issues that it faces.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A*	A	C
Science	A*	A	B	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The 2000 results for eleven-year-olds place the school's performance well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Attainment in English is well above the average of similar schools and average in mathematics and science. The school's results have not improved in line with the rising national trend over the past four years. At the age of seven, pupils' performance is average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Similar school comparisons show performance to be well below the average in all three subjects. However, because of the unusually high level of pupil mobility these comparisons disadvantage this school, as groups do not remain the same from one year to another. The school has achieved its targets in English and mathematics.

Inspectors found that attainment of the present eleven-year-olds is above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Seven-year-olds attain average standards overall in English, although reading is stronger than writing. In mathematics standards are above average and in science they are average. Standards have generally improved because of more focussed teaching and better curriculum planning. Variations from year to year in attainment in English and mathematics are often due to the high but changing proportion of pupils who are in the early stages of English acquisition.

At seven and eleven in design and technology, geography, music and physical education standards are average. At seven pupils attain average standards in history, which improve to above average by eleven. In religious education attainment meets the average standards of the local education authority's agreed syllabus. Standards in art are above average in both

¹ The rate of improvement in the school's provision of the curriculum and teaching, leadership and management and standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology have been judged from the inspection held in July 1998. Improvements in all of the other subjects have been judged from the inspection held in 1997.

infants and juniors. Attainment in ICT, although improved since the last inspection, remains below average.

Pupils leave the foundation stage with attainment in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development above average. Attainment in mathematical and personal, social and emotional development is well above average.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and the latter group achieves above average standards overall.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good
Personal development and relationships	Very good.
Attendance	Good.

Pupils consistently show respect for one others' feelings, values and beliefs and they are very enthusiastic about their school. Levels of initiative and personal responsibility are very high and relationships are very good. Attendance is now good and although a very small minority of parents are late in bringing their children to school, the systems the school has for tracking tardiness are now very good and have resulted in an improvement.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Overall, teaching is good and it is very good or better in 33 percent of lessons. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed, a significant decrease since the last inspection. Literacy is taught well and numeracy very well. The level of challenge for pupils, including those who attain higher standards, is good in mathematics and satisfactory elsewhere and this is linked to the expectations of pupils' work. For example, teachers have high expectations of the content of English work but do not regularly insist on neat handwriting and correct spelling and punctuation outside those specific lessons. The quality and use of marking and daily assessments do not sufficiently help pupils to understand what they have to achieve beyond the current lesson. Teaching methods are good and the management of pupils and the use of time, resources and support staff are very good. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language well who, as a result, make good progress. Usually pupils' efforts in class are good although more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in all subjects. The recently formed

teaching team and improvements made to curriculum planning have not had sufficient time to make a full impact.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of learning opportunities is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and pupils make good progress overall.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school's provision is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; for pupils social and cultural development provision is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for.

Links with parents are very effective and a great many parents are fully involved with the school. They have very high aspirations for the school's work and are diligent in their work on behalf of the school. The equality of access and opportunity, the contribution of the community to pupils' learning and the relationships with partner institutions are very effective. The very good procedures for promoting and improving attendance, good behaviour and supporting pupils' development are key features of the care of pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and staff work very hard to raise standards and their leadership is very effective overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities in an excellent manner and have taken action to improve the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of standards, teaching and curriculum are very good.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well to support the accurately identified school priorities.

The overall staffing, accommodation and resources are good. The governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is excellent and this has formed the basis for extremely effective action in improving the school's provision. The school applies the principles of best value by comparing its progress with other schools.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like coming to school and they make good progress.• Teaching is good and pupils behave well.• Parents are comfortable about approaching school and the school works closely with them.• The school helps pupils become mature and provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small minority of parents think pupils' reports could be better.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views about the school. Some parents visited the inspection team and reinforced their view that the school has improved dramatically since the last inspection. The school has taken notice of parents' views of reports and is in the process of improving them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1) Children enter this school from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. At any one time up to 30 languages are represented in the school and children's previous educational experiences are extremely varied; some arrive at six without any experience of formal education. Largely as a result of the community's links with the local university, the school population is highly mobile with families moving into and out of the school for periods from one month to a number of years. Many pupils complete only a part of their initial education at the school before returning to their home countries or leaving to accompany their parents during study visits abroad. It is usual for only 40 per cent of the pupils who enrol at the age of four to sit the tests for eleven-year-olds; in the past two years half of those sitting the tests at eleven have been in school for less than two years. For these reasons consecutive year groups tend to differ from each other more widely than usual and each is constantly changing its membership. Conclusions about the school's performance arrived at by comparing the results of consecutive year groups or by measuring the progress of individual year groups are considerably less reliable than in schools with more stable and less varied populations.
- 2) On entry to the school's foundation stage pupils are assessed using a series of English language based assignments; home language support will be introduced for the next school year. These assessments show that overall attainment on entry to the school is average, although each group tested is distinctly different. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) score lower than average results. By the time they reach the age to begin the National Curriculum, almost all of the current group of four-year-olds will be in line to exceed the early learning goals and many will attain higher standards in reading, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. In mathematical and social development many will attain well above these expectations. Speaking and listening skills are highly developed although the school has some way to go before children write as freely as they talk or read. Children whose home language is not English make good progress at this stage of their education. They are well supported by staff and parents, and the curriculum and foundation stage provision helps them acquire the communication skills they need to succeed.
- 3) In last year's tests for seven-year-olds standards in reading and mathematics were average and in writing were below average. Similar school comparisons show performance to be well below the average in all three subjects. Performance at the higher levels in all three subjects was well below average compared to similar schools. This group of children attained lower than average baseline scores at the age of four; its composition has also changed substantially over the three years between entry to the school and the end of Key Stage 1 tests. There are no consistent differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
- 4) Inspectors found that in the current seven-year-old group attain average standards in English, science, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In mathematics and art attainment is above average. Attainment in religious education is in line with the levels set out in the local education authority syllabus. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is below average. Much progress has been made in ICT in the recent past to improve provision and teaching, and the curriculum is improving rapidly. Control and modelling are now part of the

curriculum but pupils have not had the range of experiences they need to develop the skills to the expected levels. Computers are not used sufficiently in other subjects. In other aspects of the subject pupils reach average levels by the time pupils are eleven.

- 5) There are differences between attainment in different aspect of a subject. For example, in English standards of speaking, listening and reading are higher than of writing. This is recognised by the school and staff training and a greater emphasis has been placed on this area of work. Pupils are generally articulate and those whose home language is not English progress well in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills. All pupils are confident and all languages are valued although insufficient emphasis is placed on the use of a neat handwriting style and correct spelling and punctuation. A great delight is taken in learning and speaking new words whatever the language and pupils with English as an additional language achieve higher than average levels of speaking and reading skills. In mathematics pupils continue to build on their good levels of knowledge and gain above average levels of understanding about numbers and how to calculate. Their natural curiosity and thirst for learning is well supported by teachers in mathematics. Pupils investigate well, seeking to use their knowledge of number in their work, often coming to correct but complex solutions to the problems their teachers set for them. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and use standard measures accurately. In science by the age of seven pupils have a good understanding about how to conduct a fair test in their investigations although this area of their work is not as well developed as their knowledge and understanding about the natural world.
- 6) The 2000 national test results for eleven-year-olds place the school's performance well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Attainment in English is well above the average of similar schools and is average in mathematics and science. Performance in the higher levels is well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science when compared to similar schools. The minority of eleven-year-olds who have attended the school continuously through the primary phase are over-represented in the group of high attainers.
- 7) Inspectors found that attainment in this year's Year 6 is above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. The difference between attainment in the last set of tests and attainment seen by inspectors is due to the higher level of pupil mobility than is usually the case and that the year groups being compared are distinctly different and constantly changing. Standards in design and technology, geography, music and physical education are average and they are above average in art and history. Attainment in religious education is in line with the levels set out in the local education authority agreed syllabus. Attainment in ICT is below average; although a significant improvement has been seen recently this has not had time to make an impact on standards particularly in modelling and control. In the other strands such as communication and research standards are average.
- 8) By the age of eleven pupils have acquired a very wide and mature vocabulary and their explanations of their ideas are well structured and argued. They take a delight in language and adopt the technical vocabulary of other subjects easily to help them in their learning. All pupils make good progress in reading. They change characters as they read and extract information from a wide range of sources, including CD-ROMs and the Internet. More able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their choice of reading material and the school's new policy to provide more guidance for these pupils has not had time to make an impact. Pupils aged eleven put their knowledge of the structure of English to good effect in their writing using well-drawn illustrations and comparisons. However, work is often lacking in the correct use of punctuation, spelling

and well formed handwriting. The standard of presentation in other subjects is also below average and pupils do not use their writing skills to help them record their work. The school recognises that a high proportion of the pupils arrive at the school with differing experiences of the need to present work well and acknowledges this as an area for development. Many of the well founded activities and systems that have been adopted recently have not had time to improve these aspects of pupils' work.

- 9) Eleven-year-old pupils have a very good understanding of number and how their ideas can be applied to solve problems. They have a quick and accurate recall of number facts and the school has made good progress in planning a range of investigations within lessons. Pupils' solutions are usually very accurate although groups and pairs can take unusual and highly complicated routes to an answer. Teachers give good support in finding more straightforward solutions. There is an unusually high proportion of pupils in the current eleven-year-olds who are working at very high levels of the National Curriculum. This group formulate and solve linear equations and many pupils have a good understanding of how to display functions in four quadrants. In science pupils have good levels of understanding about how to control the variables in fair tests and have above average knowledge of life processes, materials and their properties and physical processes.
- 10) The school has recently begun to analyse test results in a thorough and useful manner although, for the reasons given above, it is difficult to track the progress of each year group of pupils as a whole. However, analysis of these results has resulted in a well-targeted programme of staff development and training to meet the needs of pupils' writing and ICT skills. Over the past four years the school's results have been below the rising national trend. However, since the school was found to require special measures of support, results have shown an improving trend and teachers, governors, parents and pupils are determined to see the rate of improvement increase. The school has achieved its targets in English and mathematics. The attainment in mathematics is higher than in the other core subjects of English and science because pupils are set targets in mathematics that helps them see goals beyond the immediate lesson. In this subject, teachers plan a range of work that is well matched to the groups within each class. In other subjects this is more likely to be achieved through different levels of support and, although the help of other adults is vital to ensure pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make progress, it is the planning of different tasks which is the key element of success in mathematics. This is particularly relevant when teachers plan work at different levels. The school's recognition of this is reflected in recent changes in policy and practice and in its school development plan.
- 11) Pupils achieve well. Pupils are curious and want to learn. They enjoy the challenges their teachers set for them. Concentrating well, they work hard in all classes of the school. The pace of learning can dip at times as pupils follow their own instincts rather than listen to their teachers' directions. Teachers, support staff, parents and governors are successful in ensuring that the school meets the diverse learning needs of pupils from a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds and with a wide variety of previous educational experiences. When standards achieved at eleven are compared with standards achieved at seven, last year's oldest junior pupils made satisfactory gains. However, this does not take account of the changing nature of each year group and when pupils are tracked against the length of time in the school, good progress is seen. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in literacy and numeracy lessons. They benefit from the good help they receive from classroom support staff and parents. This has a good effect on their learning and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Their progress and

achievements are good in other subjects, particularly when additional support is available. Pupils at the later stages of the Code of Practice make good progress with reading as a result of well-focused support from a specialist teacher for one session per week. The progress of pupils who have English as an additional language is good and they achieve above average standards overall. Skilled teaching, good records of attainment and well-structured programmes of language development support their progress. There are no discernible and distinct differences between boys and girls' attainment from year to year. The school has initiated a register for more able pupils; these pupils are tracked carefully and their progress monitored frequently. As this policy is in the early stages of implementation it is too early to make a judgment about its affect on standards across all subjects; however, the number of pupils achieving very high levels of the mathematics curriculum, which was the first subject audited, are a promising indication.

- 12) Overall standards have improved since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 13) Since the last inspection there has been a distinct and important improvement in the way pupils respond to school. Members of staff and parents readily acknowledge this improvement. Previous inspection reports comment on the adverse impact on pupils' learning of undisciplined behaviour and lack of consideration for others. This is no longer the case and pupils' approach to their schooling now contributes very positively to standards of work in the classroom.
- 14) Pupils' attitudes to their schooling are very good, for example in the way they organise themselves in preparation for the start of the day. Most pupils have settled learning routines and an enthusiasm for work, which helps them learn. There is substantial support for extra-curricular activities, including a variety of clubs and pre- and post-school activities. Every parent who responded to the inspection questionnaire agreed that their child likes school.
- 15) The behaviour of pupils is good because they are now set clear guidelines for behaviour and they understand the need to behave well. Pupils observe the school code well and also take good care of their environment. The school, including the dining room and cloakrooms, are kept tidy and there is no litter. Pupils respond positively to guidance and there is little need for sanctions of any severity. No pupil has been excluded recently. Relationships between pupils and members of staff and with each other are very good. Pupils work and play happily together with no evident tensions. Levels of cooperation are very high with little evidence of the unhelpful aspects so apparent on previous inspections.
- 16) Pupils develop very well during their time in school. They respond well to the opportunities for influence and responsibility in school especially through the school council. Helping adults and other pupils at lunchtime and in the library are valuable and worthwhile responses to responsibility. Listening skills have improved, through activities such as circle time, and pupils' discussions during lessons and their social conversations are generally sensible reflected in noise levels that are comfortable for others. Older pupils take good care of younger children. They organise playground games during the lunch break and sit patiently talking to young pupils as they eat. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is not their home language are fully integrated into all activities. They like and respect their teachers and support staff and behave well. Other pupils and all staff are sensitive to their needs and make good efforts to include them in group activities and class discussions. This has a good

effect on their personal development and self-esteem. Pupils whose home language is not English are appreciated and supported by all pupils. All languages are valued and the experiences pupils bring with them from their home countries are respected.

- 17) Attendance has improved generally and is now good for pupils of compulsory school age. Unauthorised absence is negligible. There has been a dramatic improvement in punctuality, with the exception of just a few families. This is due to the measures introduced by the school, and lateness no longer has a disruptive effect on the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

- 18) The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. At that time most lessons were taught satisfactorily, a few were taught well but one in six was unsatisfactory. In otherwise satisfactory lessons pace and demand were often not sufficient. The quality of teaching is now good overall with almost all lessons being taught at least satisfactorily. In 33 per cent of lessons teaching is of very good or excellent quality and in 80 per cent it is at least good. In only one lesson was the quality of teaching less than satisfactory. This improvement in the quality of teaching has shown itself in improved rates of pupils' progress, much higher standards of pupils' behaviour and a significant increase in the level of support and appreciation from parents. Improvement has been brought about by governors ensuring that changes were made in the teaching staff and by the leadership and management of the school insisting that the staff as a unit understand the need to improve the quality of teaching in order to raise standards. There is still work to do, notably, ensuring that tasks better fit the needs of all pupils by improving the use of day-to-day assessment in planning and in raising standards of presentation and in some important aspects of writing. However, leaders and governors understand the nature of the tasks they face and their systems of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching are effective.
- 19) There is very good use of time in some classes where pupils are given limits to help them complete their work at a brisk pace. This increases the amount that children and pupils learn and gives rise to a fast work rate. For example, in a lesson for ten-year-olds about using an illustration program, the teacher gave pupils very straightforward tasks to complete within very short time limits. The pace of the lesson was very brisk and a great deal of work was completed. As a result, groups of pupils directed a great deal of intellectual effort and concentration into completing their tasks. Waiting between activities was a fault of the only unsatisfactory lesson observed. In those groups supported by special educational needs or English as an additional language (EAL) teachers, the pace of lessons is again good. Individual and group tasks are carefully supervised and teachers ensure that all pupils work hard while enjoying their tasks.
- 20) Support staff and teachers work very well together. Learning support staff, nursery nurses and adults who support pupils whose home language is not English are well prepared to help in class. Nursery nurses and learning support assistants are involved in planning and ensuring that they participate in meeting pupils' needs. Resources are used very well. Classrooms are always ready for work when pupils arrive and care is taken to have resources available for pupils to use if the need arises. For example, in a mathematics lesson in the class of four and five-year-olds, pupils were able to select blocks and rods to represent numbers so that they could order them.

- 21) Generally, teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is good. In mathematics and art, for example, good levels of subject knowledge help teachers to plan demanding and interesting work. The oral starter in a mathematics lesson for pupils in their final year of the school was difficult to bring to an end because more able pupils were so bent on supporting their own methods. The teacher worked well with this group; subject knowledge was sufficiently high as to allow pupils as much time as was available in order that they reached the important point in their work before giving the signal for them to join the main part of the lesson. In a dance lesson nine-year-olds improve and performed a traditional English country dance very well because the teacher's subject knowledge was well developed.
- 22) The teaching of basic skills is initially good in all classes. The highest standards are achieved in mathematics where teachers have given pupils targets. This results in pupils having a very good knowledge of number and being able to apply their skills in other subjects, for example science and design and technology. Pupils are taught all of the basic skills well; writing and reading in the first instance. However, there is insufficient insistence that pupils write neatly or use correct spelling and punctuation in lessons other than those in which they are taught and as a consequence pupils do not practise them consistently enough. Standards of presentation are below average, largely because teachers do not insist on high enough standards. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is not well enough developed. The recent improvements in provision have helped to increase the rate of skill development but there is still some way to go before information and communication technology skills are used frequently to support learning in other curriculum areas.
- 23) The other main area for development is to better connect teachers' day-to-day assessments with longer term planning of pupils' targets. At present, teachers tell pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of a lesson. This helps pupils understand the context of their work and how it is linked to previous learning. Some good quality marking was seen in which teachers gave pupils very clear indications what they should do next to improve their work. However, pupils are not given long-term targets for improvement and they often do not see aims that go beyond the immediate lesson. The exception to this is in mathematics where targets have just been adopted. Greater use of daily assessments will lead to greater clarity in planning, especially for more able pupils, and help all pupils better understand how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve.
- 24) Methods encourage pupils to become involved in lessons and at times they are highly motivated by their teachers' work. A very good example of this was seen in the class of six and seven-year-olds. The teacher had been using a book about an ogre and had not only found a copy of the book in Spanish by searching the Internet but had also 'invited' the ogre to attend that morning's lesson. This achieved a number of very positive results; a Spanish-speaking child was invited to take the text of the book home so that parents could participate in the work, all pupils could question the ogre as to why he behaved in such an appalling manner and the very high levels of interest produced levels of concentration and work rate which were well above the levels found in other classes for pupils of this age. This was one example in which an informal approach to working at home proved effective. The recently reformulated policy on homework is producing satisfactory results at the moment but has not had sufficient time to take full effect.
- 25) The teaching of pupils who have special needs and for whom English is not their home language is good. Teachers know the pupils well and make good efforts to involve

them in all activities. They target them in discussion sessions so that they do not feel left out. For example, a teacher involved a pupil who is currently experiencing special educational needs effectively in a physical education lesson by praising and valuing his tentative efforts to join in a dance activity. Teachers and pupils wait patiently for EAL pupils to formulate answers to the questions they have been posed. Teachers are fully aware of the targets in pupils' individual special educational needs plans and build them appropriately into general classroom activities. Work in all subjects is modified effectively to meet particular needs. For example, in a literacy lesson for seven-year-olds the teacher prepared a writing frame for the special needs pupils and modelled on a flip chart what needed to be done. The pupils understood the task well as a result and made good progress with their writing. Good records are kept of pupils' progress in the stages of English acquisition. All languages are valued and appreciated. There are many very good quality foreign language books available and these resources are used well by teachers, parents and support workers.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS

- 26) Key curriculum issues arose from both the 1997 and 1998 inspections. These centred on a lack of curriculum balance in the infants and weaknesses and inconsistencies in planning across the school. There were no policies or schemes of work in many subjects. The rate of improvement has been good with these issues, particularly so recently, building on the work of the last two years. The school has a good curriculum overall and one that is developing rapidly. The school now provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities, which is suitable for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good. It effectively develops children's aptitudes well in all areas of learning.
- 27) The many different languages spoken by the pupils are celebrated and enrich the life of the school; it has received an International School's Award in recognition of its work. Those pupils who need extra support with English receive effective help both from teachers and support staff. Specific provision is implemented for pupils who have special educational needs. Individual education plans and Statements of Special Need are well targeted, up-to-date and improve the quality of pupils' learning effectively. The 1998 report noted that pupils at the early stages of support had targets that were too generic and could be applied to many lower attaining pupils. This has been successfully addressed and targets are now much more specific to the individual. The school has begun to identify particularly gifted and talented pupils and compiled a register on the basis of agreed criteria. This feature of the school's work is at an early stage of development and its impact is not yet clear although the work completed in mathematics is promising in its impact on the attainment of more able eleven-year-olds.
- 28) All subjects receive appropriate time allocations, an improvement since the last inspection. The imbalances in the curriculum for information and communication technology have begun to be addressed effectively although computers are still not used sufficiently to support work in other subjects. The range of learning opportunities includes good provision for personal and health education and satisfactory provision for sex education and drugs awareness teaching. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision of religious education and collective worship. Curriculum planning has improved markedly since the 1997 inspection. Policies and schemes of work to support planning in all subjects are good. Many have been revised since September 2000 and are still being established in practice. The school has

effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy that result in good standards, particularly in mathematics, by the end of the junior stage. This represents good success given the high pupil mobility and the many different languages represented in the school.

- 29) There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including sport, French, chess, art and gardening. Most of these are organised and run by the parents and provide enrichment for the curriculum. The school has very good links with the community, other schools, colleges and the university. There are many visits made by the pupils into the community and visitors bring experiences and skills to support work in the school, for example, undergraduates come into school to work with higher attaining pupils.
- 30) The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good and has improved since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and for moral development is good while provision for pupils' social and cultural development is very good.
- 31) The school provides opportunities through assemblies, and especially in religious education lessons, for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of others. Although assemblies focus mainly on moral and social issues, a candle provides a focus for reflection and worship. This would be more effective if it were only lit during the act of worship to help pupils understand that this is a special time of the day. However, the visitors who talk to pupils about their religion and its practices provide valuable opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of the beliefs of others. In a very good lesson observed during the inspection, pupils had been encouraged to prepare questions for a parent from Mongolia. She came to school dressed in her traditional clothes and, supported by her son, gave pupils a sensitive and thought provoking insight into her Buddhist faith. Pupils learnt that Buddhism varies from place to place but understood the principals of enlightenment and some of the symbolism of the faith. The burning of incense enhanced the spirituality of the lesson. Although pupils study a range of poetry, literature, art and listen to a variety of music, provision for their spiritual development is not specifically planned within these aspects of the curriculum.
- 32) From the time they start school, teachers take care to ensure that their pupils understand the principles of right and wrong. Most already have a strong sense of justice and understand that all are entitled to respect. Pupils respect each other's differences while understanding that there are values that are common to all. The Newnham Code and class rules are understood and respected by all and often referred to by the teachers. In "Golden Time", for example, eight-year-olds pupils discussed the concept of a "special person," and that if individuals have rights, these should be accompanied by responsibilities. The teacher guided her pupils towards the idea that obeying rules has a positive effect on others. The new behaviour policy has had a considerable impact on the standards of behaviour in school and it is applied consistently throughout the school. There is a good scheme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- 33) The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Almost all pupils start school confidently with high self-esteem and confidence. Teachers value this and pupils are successfully encouraged to work co-operatively together in groups, pairs and as a class. There is an expectation that pupils will cooperate with each other, organise themselves well and work hard. As a result, six-year-old pupils maintained concentration well and worked hard to produce a performance of a story, independently of adults. Monitors arrange the hall for assemblies, older pupils look after the reception

children at playtime and lunchtime and the school council with two representatives from each class discuss whole school issues. The strongest aspect of pupils' social development is the consistency of the school's community ethos. Adults work well together, sharing a common desire to move the school forward. The diversity of different cultures is celebrated and adults and pupils alike respect social differences. Parents play a major part in the pupils' education and the activities they provide enable the pupils to develop social skills beyond the classroom. They are expected to be responsible for fulfilling their commitments. Pupils write to a school in Ghana and contribute to a charity based there. The school's improved provision for social development has helped pupils develop very good social attributes and this issue which was identified in the previous two reports has been clearly and very effectively addressed.

- 34) The teachers look upon the diversity of different cultures in school as an ideal opportunity for pupils to experience the richness of other cultures. Texts using different languages and scripts are part of the fabric of the school. In lessons, other languages and cultures are referred to often and pupils within the class and in other classes contribute. For example, a Japanese pupil produced a translation of a haiku for a literacy lesson in the top class of the juniors. Parents are regular visitors to school and their support is planned into the curriculum. During the inspection, when a Mongolian mother joined her son to support a lesson about Buddhism pupils learnt a great deal, not only about Buddhism, but also about the social and cultural implications of practising a minority religion in England. The library has a good range of books to support pupils' understanding of different cultures. The school's provision for art is good and pupils have a good understanding of the work of Western artists. Many pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, and there is a thriving choir run by a parent. Residential and educational visits support this aspect of pupils' development. The school has won an award for achievements in International Education. The school has recognised that there is a need to extend the music and art curriculum to include more examples of non-European art and music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

- 35) There is good provision for the care and guidance of pupils and the school continues to be a safe environment. Procedures promote good behaviour very effectively and eliminate oppressive conduct. Pupils are involved in formulating codes that are implemented consistently by members of staff. Expectations of good behaviour are high and pupils are trusted. Procedures for monitoring attendance have virtually eliminated problems of punctuality and lateness no longer disrupts the start of sessions in the way it did at the time of the last inspection.
- 36) Arrangements for the safety and protection of pupils are good. Health and safety procedures are thorough, with regular risk assessments and follow up action monitored by the governing body. The safety of pupils features well in lessons, for example, when transferring from the school premises for swimming. Child protection procedures are good and are fully in line with local requirements.
- 37) The support staff and parent helpers have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide the pupils well. They have a good awareness of the personal as well as the academic needs of the pupils helping to create a safe and secure environment for them. Good support is obtained from external services for pupils with specific difficulties to conduct assessments and to provide advice and support. All teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of pupils' individual needs and procedures to monitor and support their personal development are

good. This is the case for all groups of pupils including those who have special needs and those who have English as an additional language. Pupils' achievements are celebrated and there is an emphasis on high self-esteem, recognition of each pupil's worth, awareness of personal safety and positive relationships. For example, the 'high flyer' certificates are presented to pupils for significant academic and behavioural achievements each week. A 'writer of the week award' enhances self-esteem and helps to give writing a high profile in the school.

- 38) There has been satisfactory improvement in the assessment of pupils' academic progress since the reports in 1997 and 1998. This has been more rapid since the beginning of the academic year. Improvement has coincided with improvements in curriculum planning which is now much more focused on consistency in the development of key subject skills. This has given the school a much more secure base from which to build assessment practices. Procedures for recording pupils' progress are now satisfactory overall with particular strengths in mathematics and English. Useful records of progress in reading, writing and spelling are kept by all teachers and in mathematics pupils' acquisition of key mathematics objectives are carefully recorded and individual targets are set.
- 39) The school makes good use of the analysis of pupils' performance in statutory National Curriculum tests and in optional English and mathematics tests in the juniors. The results from all these tests are carefully analysed in order to identify areas of strength and those requiring further development. This is done with reference to individual classes and also to those requiring a whole school focus such as the standard of pupils' writing. In addition this analysis has provided the school with valuable information about the relative performance of boys and girls and the performance of pupils who have English as an additional language.
- 40) Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to plan pupils' work are good for children in the foundation stage. Local education authority tests are used soon after children enter the school and results are used effectively to group pupils and meet their individual needs. Teachers track children's experiences and progress towards the early learning goals in a satisfactory manner. This helps them build effectively on what the children know, understand and can do. In the infants and juniors, the results of assessments are used well to inform the planning of work in mathematics and in particular to set targets for pupils. The school plans to extend this valuable process and set targets for pupils in English and science. The subject and assessment co-ordinators are working closely with class teachers to improve procedures and this is leading to greater consistency in record keeping and in the development of more effective use of assessment to guide planning in these subjects.
- 41) Procedures for assessing the needs of pupils who have special needs, including those who have a Statement of Special Need, are good. These procedures have improved since the previous inspections when inconsistencies were noted. The results of assessments are used effectively in the planning of their work and in the formulation of their individual education plans and statements. Teachers and support staff maintain good records and systems are well organised. This ensures that pupils' progress is tracked effectively over time. Appropriate support is obtained from external services for pupils with specific difficulties in order to conduct relevant assessments and provide support and guidance for teaching and support staff. Arrangements for assessing the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language are very good at an individual level. Their progress is tracked and good quality records are maintained.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- 42) The school now enjoys the overwhelming confidence of parents, who are very positive about the school in almost all areas of its work. There is a distinct contrast between the questionnaire results for this inspection compared to the last survey in 1997. Then there were no significant strengths indicated but six areas of significant concern. In the current survey, parents expressed substantial support in nine of the twelve areas covered with no significant concerns, although some parents would like to receive better information about their children's progress. The inspection findings support all of these very positive views and the issue of the quality of school reports.
- 43) Information provided to parents is generally good. Information transmitted about the general life of the school is very good using newsletters, curriculum information and a parent's notice board. Formal publications, such as the school prospectus are of very high quality. Information is provided in six languages. Information in reports about pupils' progress is satisfactory overall and they contain detailed information about what pupils attain in areas of their work. However, information about progress and targets for improvement are lacking in some cases. Subjects are grouped together in reports for pupils in the infant classes and coverage of some of these subjects is, at times, slight.
- 44) Parental involvement in almost all aspects of school life substantially supports pupils' learning and has contributed significantly to the rate of whole school improvement. Parents are very interested in what pupils are learning, provide active support in the classroom and lead extra-curricular activities, such as music and art clubs. Recent changes to the homework policy reflect parental wishes and foster a concept of learning at home. A parent/teacher association raises substantial funds for school improvement and provides valued support for the school community as a whole. Very high levels of fundraising and financial and practical support for an arts and technology suite also figure largely in the support parents provide. These high levels of interest and involvement provide a sharp challenge to the school to be constantly looking for ways to improve and this has created a very effective and productive partnership.
- 45) The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. The parents are invited to reviews of those pupils on the register of special needs and are informed when the school wants to involve outside specialists. The parents know the targets in the pupils' individual education plans and specifically focused homework are provided for pupils who have a Statement of Special Need. The parents of pupils who have English as an additional language are encouraged and valued in their support for the school and their children. This support is put to good use in translating and writing dual language stories, helping in class and maintaining the school's drive to improve the provision for speakers of languages other than English.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

- 46) The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff is very good. There is a clear and secure commitment to raise standards and managers, including curriculum coordinators, have worked very hard in the past few months to review subject policies and build effectively on preceding improvements to teaching and the curriculum. Parents attest to the sense of professionalism and how the present staff team, the large majority of whom arrived at the school during the past fifteen months, are building on the good work since the last inspection. The very high turnover of staff means that it will take a little time before policies have had time to complete the improvements and therefore make their full effect felt. However, since the last inspection all staff members and governors are aware of the priorities and there are many indications that

the school will continue to improve at a brisk pace. In the past few months a great deal of hard and well-directed work has produced a very thorough analysis of the school's work which has provided a basis for a very detailed and useful improvement plan. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity, ensuring that all pupils achieve high standards and building the very best relationships between the community and the school is evident in the manner in which all staff work within the school.

- 47) The work of the governing body since the last inspection is of the highest quality and it fulfils its statutory obligations. Taking immediate action to support the areas of weakness identified in the inspection of 1997, governors sought to appoint active and effective members to their team. The governing body has contributed much to shaping the direction of the school by:
- helping to make key recommendations about the place of the school in the local community;
 - addressing the shortcomings in its own work, particularly monitoring the school's work;
 - contributing its informed judgement on appointment issues; and
 - maintaining a very brisk work rate.
- 48) Their actions have raised the confidence of parents, which in turn has had a very beneficial affect on the morale of pupils and staff members. Through its effective review processes and its highly effective committee structure the governors successfully support the school, act as critical friends to the headteacher and staff, oversee improving standards and help secure better provision. They carefully supervise all aspects of the school's work. Governors have subjects to monitor and areas such as special educational needs, English as an additional language (EAL) and curriculum development are supervised in a very thorough manner.
- 49) The leadership and management of special educational needs and the provision for EAL are very good. Few comments were made in the previous reports but indications are that provision has improved. The special educational needs co-ordinator has given a very clear direction to the development of this provision. Recently appointed, she has made a good start in restructuring the materials used by teachers to plan pupils' programmes. There is a good policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and clearly outlines for all staff the processes involved. Day-to-day management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and there are many valuable models in this work to support the needs of other groups of pupils, including high attainers. EAL is the responsibility of all subject coordinators and one teacher has special responsibility of international education. The EAL part-time teacher liases very well with senior managers and other members of staff, acting as a trainer and professional support. This work is very well thought of by the school and has a positive effect on the standards of provision.
- 50) The governors have turned around a very difficult financial situation. Educational priorities are now questioned and sifted and once the validity of a priority has been established, the governing body seeks to support the development with appropriate levels of funding. Since the last inspection financial monitoring and control have improved significantly. Processes are well managed by administrative staff and funding, including the substantial funds raised by parents, are efficiently and effectively used. By comparing the school's work with other similar schools and the national picture governors have a very good understanding of the principles of best value. For example, within the last two years, the appointment of a site officer has ensured that the school is maintained well and that this service is cost effective.

- 51) The levels of staffing are good, being supplemented by a good number of parent helpers. Staffing arrangements are good and the school has a sufficient number of teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum. Careful recruiting into a number of teaching posts at the beginning of the year has built a team with a shared commitment to succeed. Induction and staff support are effectively managed through daily briefing meetings and a staff manual. There is a direct link between professional development and school development planning and links are proposed for performance management procedures, which are presently at the initial round of planning meetings.
- 52) The accommodation is very good and provides a stimulating and well-maintained place for pupils to learn and play. There is a sufficient number of well organised classrooms and other areas are utilised efficiently to supplement classroom provision, for example, a music room and a temporary computer base in a wide corridor until planned improvements are completed. External areas continue to provide ample space for a wide range of team games and informal play, including a well cared for environmental area. Accommodation is set to improve further by the development of an arts and technology suite.
- 53) There is good provision generally for learning resources in all subjects of the curriculum and they are used well to support pupils' work. A well-organised library has a good range of reference books and includes many dual language books for pupils for whom English is not the home language although it does not provide sufficient facilities for pupils to work. There is good provision for outdoor play equipment for younger pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- 54) The governors and headteacher should:
- (1) *Raise standards in information and communication technology by implementing the subject development plan without delay, in particular in order to:
 - o further strengthen the knowledge and understanding of teachers;
 - o permanently arrange the computers so that ICT skills can be consistently taught;
 - o ensure that ICT is used in other subjects where appropriate;
 - o ensure the entitlement of pupils to the whole ICT curriculum.
(paragraphs 4, 7, 22, 28, 85, 97, 105, 108, 120, 122-25)
 - (2) *Improve the use of day-to-day assessment information, including marking, to inform lesson plans, other than in mathematics, so that teachers:
 - o set tasks better suited to all pupils' abilities;
 - o set targets for pupils to help them be aware of their longer term learning needs.
(paragraphs 10, 18, 23, 40, 94, 107, 120, 132)
 - (3) *Raise standards of presentation and the use of spelling and punctuation in daily work by:
 - o adopting higher expectations of pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting;
 - o consistently emphasising through marking the importance of correct spelling and punctuation and tidy presentation.
(paragraphs 5, 8, 18, 22, 84, 92, 94, 100, 107)

OTHER MINOR ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN

- * Continue the development of the pupils' annual reports (*paragraph 43*)
- * Improve the resources for non-European music and art (*paragraph 34*)

***The school is aware of this issue and has already identified it in its development plan.**

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- 55) Within the school it is not unusual for 30 nationalities and languages to be represented. A high proportion of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and in some cases they are multilingual. They can arrive in the school at any time during their primary years and stay for many years or just a period of weeks. They experience a wide range of pre-school educational experiences and some young children come to the school with no educational experience of any type. Regular support is provided funded by the Ethnic Minority and Travellers' Achievement Grant (EMTAG) for pupils who are "achieving at a lower rate than expected for their cognitive ability". This support is appropriately provided where need is greatest and can take the form of pupils working with teachers in a variety of ways within classrooms.
- 56) Children with EAL who enter school as four-year-olds are assessed and, as would be expected with children who are new to English as a means of communication, score below average results. Last year home language support was not available during these assessments, although this will change next year. Regular assessments show that most children in the infant classes make rapid progress in English and national test results for seven-year-olds show higher than average attainment in English and mathematics for the EAL pupils who took the tests. Tests for eleven-year-olds for the year 2000 show that in English, mathematics and science results were in line with or above the national average for the pupils who took the tests.
- 57) Discussion with infant teachers and EAL support teachers and a scrutiny of records indicate slower progress in English is made by pupils from Asian countries such as Korea, Japan and China when measured against the progress made by children with European backgrounds. The common European language roots and similarities of educational experiences of European children seem to help pupils to achieve quicker rates of progress. The support offered by parents and other members of minority ethnic groups within the local community are a significant factor in supporting pupils' progress whatever their linguistic backgrounds.
- 58) A specialist teacher from the local education authority EMTAG team supports EAL in school for two days a week. The quality of teaching is good. Planning takes place with class teachers to ensure that all pupils with EAL receive a balanced curriculum and provision that meets their needs. On entry to the school pupils are assessed and this determines the level of support and subsequent planning for each child. A specially devised, good quality target setting sheet is used to record aspects of liaison with the class teacher, the process of assessment, lesson plans and a review date for termly language assessment. Work for targeted EAL pupils is planned in conjunction with the class teacher. It is reviewed and good records are kept. Class teachers refer to the planning when specific EMTAG support is not available. The information is used well to help consolidate, reinforce and extend key concepts and vocabulary. Planning shows a good balance between language and subject content. Effective support was observed in the plenary session of literacy lessons in that good levels of encouragement are

given to speak out and this support ensures that pupils are fully involved in the lesson and notes of pupils' contributions are taken for assessment purposes.

- 59) Teachers in all classes use a good variety of teaching methods effectively to support learning in literacy and numeracy. Good subject links were evident in planning and teaching as a class of nine-year-olds role-played a trip to the Caribbean. Classrooms reflect the diverse backgrounds of the pupils and several rooms have large, good quality, displays focussing on the country of origin of each child in the class. Examples of displays featuring other countries and cultures are evident in classrooms and corridors. These include Chinese New Year, samples of origami work made by pupils, important religious and cultural festivals and photographs of pupils surrounding a large world map.
- 60) All the work of pupils who have EAL is firmly located within the National Curriculum. They are supported within the classroom and have full access to all lessons and strands of the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched and improved by pupils' cultural backgrounds and their experiences. Teachers exploit these experiences to enhance the quality of provision and place great value on the skills and attributes of pupils and their families. The school places great importance on cultural sensitivity and overtly recognises all the nationalities represented in school. Pupils acknowledged their ability to speak more than one language happily and are not at all shy in doing so. English speaking children expressed delight at being able to count to ten in another language. During lunch it is commonplace for pupils to discuss the contents of their respective lunch boxes in a variety of languages.
- 61) The highly mobile and diverse EAL population of the school makes the tracking and monitoring of pupils' attainment both complex and challenging. The EAL staff maintain daily records of attainment and the progress through the local education authority's stages of language acquisition. Because of the constantly changing year groups it is very difficult to analyse data for groups of pupils; at times single pupils represent a whole language group. This means that comparisons are unlikely to lead to valid comparisons. The senior managers are in the process of devising a system that will enable them to track the progress of different groups of pupils. EAL staff have devised staff training based on a recent government publication to aid the assessment of progress in EAL. This document should help link the National Curriculum English scales more firmly with local education authority described language levels.
- 62) Where possible, the home language is used to support learning. The ethos of the school supports other adults and parents working in classes and using home language where appropriate. Russian, Hebrew, Korean and Spanish were heard in assemblies and lessons. Good use is made of dual language texts, for example, Japanese/English dictionaries are used to support the learning of new words in the junior classes and a Spanish version of the class 'big book' was found on the Internet by a class teacher of the six and seven-year-olds.
- 63) Classrooms contain evidence of parental involvement in school ranging from attractive number charts in different scripts and languages to the signs around the school in many languages. The library has large posters hung from the ceiling that give relevant information about the library in four languages. The 'Reading and Writing Together' project generated a collection of dual language books made by parents and children. Examples of these books can be found in Japanese, Korean and Italian. When appropriate, visitors are invited into school to talk in assemblies about different international festivals. The value that the school and community place on the 'international dimension' of the school through such initiatives as the International

Award and the international garden has a positive effect on learning. It enables new arrivals to the school to feel secure whilst settling to learn in a culture and with a new language.

- 64) The school gives a great deal of thought as to how best to support effective communication between school and families. The very good quality school brochure has been translated into the five most common languages to assist parents and children in the first stages of contact with the school and other translations can be obtained as required. Much is made of the first days of the child's schooling, resulting in the child feeling both welcome and special. A system of identifying other children of the same culture and or language is in place as an additional support for the new child. The school has developed a very useful network of adults who are willing and capable of offering support to new arrivals. The ethos of the school encourages parents to come into school during the day to be with their children.

- 65) The whole school environment and resources reflect the school's diverse population. For example, the reading areas in classrooms are well stocked with books that represent a variety of scripts, languages and cultures. One classroom has a box that is marked 'international books'. The library is extremely well stocked. The consideration with which books have been chosen given the diverse cultures within the school is excellent. Such confidence in and respect for other languages and cultures is due to the commitment of the staff and parents in making the ethos of the school one that respects cultural and linguistic diversity.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	31	48	17	2	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		37

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	76 (with 30 at an early stage of Engl. Lang. acquisition)

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	21	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (89)	72 (86)	79 (94)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	20	21	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (91)	72 (94)	79 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	9	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	19	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (91)	76 (91)	95 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (6)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	19	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (91)	76 (100)	95 (96)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	160
Any other minority ethnic group	12

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: YR-Y7

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	403,739
Total expenditure	417,407
Expenditure per pupil	1,741
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,085
Balance carried forward to next year	15,417

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	34	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	48	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	49	13	1	4
The teaching is good.	63	27	3	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	48	18	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	18	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	35	1	1	6
The school works closely with parents.	54	38	6	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	65	30	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	48	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	34	7	1	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 68) The quality of the provision for the foundation stage, which includes all the children who have not yet started Year 1 of the National Curriculum, is good. The children feel secure and happy in both the reception class and the mixed reception and Year 1 class. The teachers are sensitive to the age, experiences and the wishes of the children and parents when deciding which children join the Year 1 class. Children enter school at the beginning of the academic year of their fifth birthday. The majority of children enter school independent and confident and they settle in quickly and good quality teaching has a positive impact on children's learning. At the last inspection children were judged to have achieved well in all six areas of learning. Although some children enrol and leave throughout this year, most the current group of reception age children will exceed the early learning goals and many will attain higher standards in reading, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching too has improved; judged to be usually sound and often good, it is now consistently good.
- 69) Almost all children who have been brought up in Cambridge have attended one of the many nurseries or pre-school groups around the city. Communication with these institutions has improved over the last year and the teachers have visited eight of them. The teachers have established regular contacts with the nursery attached to the school. The nursery attends class assemblies and the children visit the school. The nursery staff and reception teachers are beginning to monitor the impact of the foundation stage. The co-ordinator for the foundation stage is aware of the value of liaison with the pre-school providers and the need to strengthen them. This forms part of the school's priorities for development alongside the implementation of the new foundation stage for education.
- 70) Many children start school with a home language other than English. Fourteen children in the reception class do not speak English at home and nine are at the early stages of English language development and receive support. The overall attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, depending on the proportion that are in the early stages of English language acquisition. Baseline assessments carried out over the last four years during the children's first half term indicate average attainment. The majority of children come to school with intellectual curiosity, a delight in books and stories and a well-established understanding of numeracy. Those with English as an additional language have very good support from the specialist teacher, class teachers and the classroom support staff. Parents are generous with their time and children are supported throughout all the activities in the classes. Teachers and nursery nurses encourage children to talk and listen and as result children with English as an additional language make good progress. This year, the children in the foundation stage have above average skills in communication, language and literacy, their knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical and their creative development. Their personal and social skills and mathematical understanding are well above average. There are no children who have been identified as having special educational needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 71) The vast majority of children enter school with confidence and a desire to learn. They rapidly feel safe and secure in their new environment as a result of the caring and supportive environment created by the adults. The children behave well, entering school with some understanding of the needs of others. Many children come from homes where they are encouraged to communicate and ask questions. The majority of children, whatever their home language, are aware of their strengths and enjoy imparting their knowledge and experiences. Some come with their own agendas and priorities and are learning to exercise restraint in group or class discussion with sensitive and consistent encouragement from the teachers. When they are interested in their work or play, almost all children sustain concentration for long periods. A good book, for example, will grip a child for twenty minutes. Most children of this age would change their book several times. In one lesson, a group of children got rather restless as the teacher discussed types of transport with them. Calm was restored as soon as she asked them to find different methods of travel in books. Many demonstrate pride in their achievements while others accept that they achieve well. Their achievements are appreciated which gives them very good self-esteem.
- 72) When working or playing in groups, children cooperate with each other. For example, five children worked together to build a house for the Gingerbread Man. There was an animated discussion about the content of the garden. A consensus was reached. The garden was paved, with a water feature. This was frozen so the Gingerbread Man would not fall in and dissolve. One or two children prefer to work and play alone, joining in occasionally. The adults respect this and give them space to do so, while encouraging them to join in when direct teaching is taking place. Effective use of glove puppets helps the more reticent children to express themselves through role-play. Children with English as an additional language are not daunted by their lack of English vocabulary. They work hard at their English. Other children respect their needs and often enjoy learning words from each other's languages. Children know how to care for themselves. They are aware of the need to be safe. During one lesson children discussed safe places to play and the need to be sensible. They treat tools with respect. Adults encourage them to handle potentially dangerous equipment safely. During the inspection children used the oven to bake gingerbread men, using an oven cloth to put their baking trays in the oven.
- 73) Teaching is good and adults form good role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. They wait patiently for children with English as an additional language to express themselves or find a technical word, giving gentle support and praise. Children are encouraged to take turns to speak and not to interrupt each other. Both teachers are beginning to record their children's progress in developing social skills, especially children with English as an additional language and the very few who have not attained the early learning goal for personal and social development. The vast majority of the children show levels of maturity well above the expectations for their age. One or two children in the mixed aged class have levels of maturity higher than some of the pupils in Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

- 74) Children in both classes communicate very well. Those with English as an additional language, who do not have the vocabulary they need, use gestures combined with their home language to make themselves understood, repeating the English translation confidently. The guidance they are given to aid pronunciation enables them to learn swiftly and with confidence. Other children help and often enjoy learning words from

other languages. Children have a wide vocabulary and a good understanding of the structure of language. Whole sentences are used, often enhanced with adjectives. Teachers use adult vocabulary first, simplifying when there is a need. For example, children "discuss" issues, "research" and "collaborate". In both classes, children enjoy listening to stories. They all join in repeated passages with great expression and style. In role-play situations, including the use of puppets to support the role, almost all children assume the voice and facial expressions of the character.

- 75) Children read well. A few are confident and expressive readers, achieving the level expected at the end of the infants. All the children handle books carefully, turning pages in sequence and identifying the text on the page. Many know some letter sounds and even the lower achieving children can recognise a written word from its initial sound. The teachers use a structured commercial scheme to teach phonics and children with English as an additional language work through clearly defined levels of language acquisition. Most children understand that books can be used for research as well as to entertain. Both types are used with flair. Many of the children have reading skill within the first levels of the National Curriculum: a few are even more competent. Almost all are in line to exceed the early learning goals for reading by the end of the academic year.
- 76) The reception class is arranged so that there are opportunities for the children to write beyond their more formal guided writing and reading tasks. In the post office, for example, children can write to the Gingerbread Man to tell him to steer clear of the fox. They address their letters, stamp them and post them. Different ability groups work together with an adult to practice letter formation and writing words and sentences. Generally teaching is good and the specialist teacher for children with English as an additional language is skilful in helping the children to develop English script and the children make good progress, especially those whose home language is not written in Roman script. However, there is not an ethos of children of all abilities using the written word to communicate, to experiment and to create. Almost all the activities are adult directed and children do not "write" their own books, stories, poems, lists and comments. The spontaneous and creative use of language is almost always oral. In the mixed aged class, children are encouraged to write freely as well as completing the set tasks. Children make good progress in the acquisition of writing skills. However, children in the reception class, especially the higher attainers, do not have enough opportunities to use writing independently as a tool to support their learning and for the pleasure of authorship.

Mathematical development

- 77) Children start school with a well-developed mathematical understanding. Those with English as an additional language have a good understanding of basic mathematical concepts, ordering numbers, addition and subtraction, position, shape and measures. The teachers and support staff help them learn the technical language to support their understanding. In their numeracy lesson, children add and subtract mentally within 10 and count beyond this. They add, for example, one more to 15 accurately. Some children record their calculations accurately and are working with numbers beyond 20.
- 78) Children name common shapes, naming triangular, rectangular and square surfaces when building a house from blocks. When making their gingerbread men, measures were referred to as a matter of course. Size, shape and thickness were discussed accurately and children were very precise in their use of language. One girl said; "We compared the size and shape of our mixture, but did not actually weigh the ingredients. The teacher did that." They describe the pattern used to create caterpillars, many

understanding sophisticated terms like "spiral". In the "post office" they design stamps, write a numeric value on them and know that stamps are needed to pay the postmen to deliver the letters.

- 79) Overall, the quality of teaching is good and teachers have a good understanding of the steps children make in their mathematical development. They provide good resources, explain new work clearly, have high expectations and give the children appropriate support in groups or individually. They carefully promote mathematical language. As a result, even those children whose home language is not English are acquiring a good mathematical vocabulary. Daily counting and ordering activities, counting the number of children present and, for example, recording the different ways groups of children come to school on a chart all contribute to the children's awareness and understanding of mathematics. Mathematical planning includes activities for those who need more support and extension activities for those capable of higher attainment. Almost all children have achieved the early learning goals already and many are working towards, or achieving, the first level of the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 80) Children come from families with a wide range of different cultural traditions and bring a rich diversity of experiences to school. These are valued and celebrated by the adults and children alike and there is harmony amongst the children. The children have a curiosity about language and the world at large. They are eager to learn from each other and their teachers, often learning the names of things in several languages and teaching is good in this aspect of learning.
- 81) Children know where they live and the countries they come from. They explain how they have changed since they were babies and are aware of the needs of younger children and young animals. They take great care of infants in role-play. Children understand what happens to water on cold days and apply this to their discussions when planning the Gingerbread Man's garden. They discuss the feel, taste and smell of the ingredients when cooking and know that some substances are not safe to eat. They know that cooking changes the properties of the mixture. Many children discuss the holidays they have had and show photographs to the class describing their activities. An Italian boy described how his car has a ride on a train when the family goes on holiday. In one such session, the reception teacher used the photographs to test the children's understanding of climate by asking the children to find clues from the photographs to say what time of the year it was. Children with English as an additional language contributed well and the teacher and children listened attentively as they found the vocabulary they needed.
- 82) Children use information and communication technology (ICT) to control simple programmes. In inspection week the reception class had its first experience of the ICT suite and experimented with a drawing program. Although they had not used these computers before it was apparent that many had used the mouse before and could control it with reasonable accuracy. All enjoyed clicking, some with unfortunate results, losing the program. The eight available adults gave good support, saving the day! Children in the foundation stage have a good knowledge and understanding of the world and should exceed the early learning goals by the end of their reception year.

Physical development

- 83) Almost all children have highly developed physical skills. Those in the mixed reception and Year 1 class balance extremely well, standing on one or the other leg for several seconds. They control their jumps, identifying different types and explain, for example, why a star jump cannot easily be used for a landing with feet together. They respond to the teacher's very high expectations of their performance and use space extremely well, looking for safe places to land. Almost all children use scissors with some skill. The lower-attaining group of children manages to cut out rectangles accurately. Pencils and paintbrushes are held appropriately and all manipulate small objects with ease. Children have moved beyond the use of malleable materials such as salt dough for the tactile experience alone, and now create models and sculptures with some skill. They wield a rolling pin evenly to create a thin biscuit. Potentially hazardous equipment is handled with care. The children have access to a stimulating play area and parents have been asked to donate a collection of wheeled apparatus for the children's use. The timetables for the week do not yet accommodate daily access to outdoor play. While a short daily outside session is desirable for children in the foundation stage, the children cope well with the daily activities that often incorporate movement and drama. Their physical development is well above average for their age.

Creative development

- 84) Children in both classes have a good sense of colour and shape. They create patterns accurately and select appropriate materials and colours to create collage. Faces have accurate features, often with eyes with long lashes! All but a few draw complete people. Children mix colours and their sketchbooks show pinks of many shades. Children fit and overlap shapes and select the ones they need for their purposes. However, there are few examples of children selecting their own materials or subjects in the reception class and there are not enough opportunities for independent artwork. Children sing simple and more complex songs enthusiastically while those in the mixed aged class identify the pitch, dynamics and timbre of sound and play instruments rhythmically. By far the strongest aspect of the children's creative development is their use of the spoken word, drama and role-play. Teaching is good in this area of development and teachers are skilled at providing opportunities. Pupils delight in literature that the majority of children bring with them as they start school and their advanced social skills and vivid imaginations enable them to empathise with the characters in the stories they hear. They cooperate to create life dramas in their activity sessions and discuss the feelings of the characters they assume. Both teachers encourage this and the impact on the progress of children with English as an additional language is impressive.

ENGLISH

- 85) The results of last year's national tests for eleven-year-olds were well above the national average and well above pupils from similar schools. This is a school with a highly mobile population; relatively few pupils in Year 6 have been in Newnham Croft throughout their schooling. This variation within each year group means that trends are difficult to identify although attainment dropped in 1998 and rose in 1999 and was maintained at that level in 2000. Care must be taken with these comparisons because of the movement of pupils in and out of the school and the size of each year group. Standards in English are higher than average at the end of the juniors, similar to the level of attainment at the time of the last inspection. This year's Year 6 pupils have well above average levels of attainment in speaking and listening and above average

attainment in reading. Their writing does not reflect the pupils' very good communication skills and although the content of pupils' writing is often above average, they do not write neatly or use correct spelling and punctuation.

- 86) At the end of the infants, pupils who are now in Year 3 achieved average reading results in the 2000 national tests and were below average in writing. These results were well below the average of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the average level 2 was well below average but an above average number achieved the higher level 3. This reflects the substantial number of pupils in the year with English as an additional language who have not yet achieved fluency in English. The present Year 2 pupils have above average speaking and listening and reading skills and their attainment in writing is in line with national expectations. Their overall attainment for English is in line with the national average for pupils in Year 2. This is lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, the transient nature of the school population means that comparisons between different cohorts of pupils need to be treated with caution as the number of pupils with English as an additional language varies from year to year. Some pupils who are in Year 2 have had no formal education before joining the year group. There are no consistent differences in the attainment of boys and girls from year to year.
- 87) When pupils start school the majority have already had interesting and stimulating experiences. Those with English as their home language are highly articulate and have a wide vocabulary. Some pupils with English as an additional language enter school with very little knowledge of the language. They make good progress in the acquisition of English, receiving very good support from the specialist teacher and other adults in school. These pupils are generally confident and soak up the language from their peers. By the time they are in Year 2, some pupils are bi-lingual, achieving higher than average speaking and reading skills. By the time pupils are in Year 6, the majority of pupils have a well-developed sense of the structure of language and use a wide, mature vocabulary. In lessons, pupils' explanations are articulate and well argued. For example, when discussing poetry forms, pupils analyse the examples they are given and define the attributes of cinquain, haiku and other types of poetry. After some thought, pupils identified differences between poetry and prose using accurate technical vocabulary. One, for example, pointed out the poems often have very few connectives. Another referred to the use of syllables, onomatopoeia and rhyming phonemes including internal rhymes. They express their preferences, giving valid reasons for their opinions, as they debate confidently within their groups or class. The skills of speaking and listening are used well in all curriculum areas. Reading too is used for research purposes and to support learning in other subjects. To a more limited extent writing is used effectively in subjects such as history but the school is aware that in religious education writing skills are not exploited to any great extent. This is also true of ICT skills. Although pupils are able to word process and use the Internet for research purposes, ICT skills are not sufficiently used in English.
- 88) Throughout the infants, pupils personify animals in stories and take on the characteristics of people in stories they have heard or in role-play situations. Almost all perform with confidence, especially if they speak through a glove puppet. In Year 1, for example, Red Riding Hood's grandmother spoke with tremulous age while the woodcutter would have deterred all but the most courageous of wolves! In this lesson pupils with English as an additional language participated fully, learning new vocabulary rapidly. The teaching was effectively shared between the class teacher and the language support teacher.

- 89) When pupils start school, although many have well-developed vocabularies and are very articulate, their listening skills are not well established. They listen to stories very attentively but many have to learn restraint when conversing with others or when they feel they have something to say. Teachers work hard to establish effective listening skills so that, as they move through the school, pupils listen to adults and each other, increasingly without interruption, even if they are impatient to speak. Almost all are avid performers. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 were extremely articulate and confident in their assembly, with four pupils speaking in their home languages of Russian, Hebrew, Korean and Spanish. As audiences, pupils are appreciative and polite, listen attentively and evaluate what they hear.
- 90) The majority of pupils already have an appreciation of stories and books when they start school. They have regular times to read throughout the school week. The school has introduced a structured programme for the teaching of phonics and, from the reception class onwards, pupils learn the high frequency words linked to the National Literacy Strategy. This structured approach gives pupils the skills to decode new words and apply reading rules to unfamiliar texts. The structure also helps those children with English as an additional language as they connect the meaning and sound of the word to the written form. Almost all pupils enjoy reading. The youngest sustain concentration with one book for long periods. By Year 2 pupils summarise the text, many predict the outcomes and all express likes and dislikes. By the age of eleven pupils write perceptive reviews of the books they read, are adept at extracting information from different sources and read poetry and prose with accuracy, often adjusting their voices to reflect the character or the mood of the text. Pupils with special needs are given good support with reading and make good progress. All pupils make good progress in acquiring reading skills, and there are good links between school and home. Fluent readers, while having plenty of opportunities to read, are not given specific tasks to challenge their skills further; for example, they select their own reading material outside the group reading work in class. The school has just introduced a policy for higher attaining pupils but this has not yet had an impact on reading provision.
- 91) Pupils apply their wide vocabulary to their written work and the content of the writing is often mature and interesting. In the infants they practice forming letters and the punctuation needed to form sentences. By Year 2 higher attaining pupils write complete sentences. They have made good progress since the beginning of the year, now writing with a legible joined script. Their spelling, if not always correct, is phonetically feasible, demonstrating knowledge of the phonemes that produce the sounds they need. The majority of Year 2 pupils have some knowledge of the use of punctuation while lower attaining pupils write single sentences and put example sentences in sequential order.
- 92) In the juniors pupils are taught the structure of English and the components that contribute to effective writing. They use this knowledge to good effect within a wide range of styles. Year 6 work includes instructions, reviews, summaries and reports, including non-chronological reports as well as story writing, description and poetry. In one book, for example, there is a very good descriptive passage about the memories of war, while another pupil paints a vivid picture with "I put my head down and pulled up my collar against the wind." Pupils from other countries achieve well, often contributing a different dimension to the lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote proverbs for homework. The Italian, Australian and Canadian proverbs promoted some discussion about similarities and differences. However, the quality of pupils' writing is often spoilt by a lack of attention to handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Although teachers sometimes correct these errors they do not insist that standards of accuracy and presentation are maintained. Even the higher attaining pupils pay little attention to the

mechanics of writing unless it is a final draft for display. Books are often untidy. Pupils forget to use a joined script, even in Year 6. Spelling is, at best, creative, and pupils regularly forget about punctuation. The school is aware of these shortcomings and is beginning to focus more on the mechanics of writing. For example, the new "Writer of the Week" award encourages higher expectations and greater effort on the part of the pupils. This has not yet had an impact on the standards of presentation overall. Pupils do not apply their knowledge of the structure and mechanics of writing to other curriculum areas. There are few examples of pupils writing extended text in, for example, religious education.

- 93) Teaching is good overall across the school and the teaching of number is very good. The specialist teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is very good in literacy lessons, and there is an element of very good class teaching. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection. In over 60 per cent of the lessons the teaching was at least good. Teachers have a good understanding of the teaching of the structure of language and their subject knowledge is secure. They have high expectations of the way pupils behave in the lessons, insisting that they listen to others speak and take turns to contribute. There is plenty of humour in lessons and teachers are aware of the intellectual levels of the pupils as even the infants show scepticism as the teacher describes herself as "extremely beautiful" and "always right". Teachers getting into difficulty with tongue twisters accept pupils' sympathetic laughter with good humour. Relationships between colleagues and pupils are good throughout the school and there is an ethos of shared commitment to learning. A strength of the teaching is the use of vocabulary, both technical and descriptive. Teachers expect pupils to use their full repertoire of vocabulary from the reception class. The interest in vocabulary is extended beyond English as pupils, with the teachers' encouragement, share their home language with their peers. Examples of a range of languages are displayed around the school. A pupil in another class had translated the Haiku in Year 6 into Japanese. Where the use of vocabulary is less successful, the teacher does not give pupils enough time to respond, repeating the question rather than waiting for the answer. Resources are used well. In Year 1, for example, Croaker Frog wears words with incorrect phonemes on his chest and pupils delight in correcting him. Simple sock puppets enable pupils to hide or show phonemes to build up words.
- 94) Most pupils make good gains in learning in the majority of the lessons. The teachers' planning gives a balance of all aspects of the curriculum and, although basic skills such as handwriting are taught well initially, there is a lack of consistency about how they are used in all pieces of work. They generally use the time available to good effect. They define clear lesson objectives although these are not always shared with the pupils. The planning reflects the weekly focuses laid down in the Literacy Strategy as each day builds on from the previous day's work. Homework is used effectively to support the work in the lessons. However, teachers' planning rarely reflects the needs of the different abilities within the class, beyond the level of support they will be given. Although some teachers plan for extension work for some pupils, these are not always shared with the pupils concerned and any variation in the teacher's expectation is based on knowledge of the pupil rather than the difficulty of the task. Lower attaining pupils and those with special needs have appropriate support and make good progress but planning does not always reflect the results of day-to-day assessments. Teachers' marking, while supportive and containing a friendly dialogue with the pupils, rarely comments on spelling, punctuation and presentation. There is not a consistent expectation that pupils' work is accurate and well presented as well as interesting. Pupils with English as an additional language have very good support from the specialist teacher and non-teaching assistants.

- 95) The management of English is good. The literacy co-ordinator has observed lessons and examined samples of pupils' work. Pupils' results in standardised tests are analysed and trends are identified. From this analysis, the standards of written work have been identified as a cause for concern and the school is focusing on writing as part of its whole school development. The need for structure in the teaching of phonics in the infants was identified and acted upon. In addition, the coordinator is in the process of identifying ways in which the planning can be linked to the school's new policy for high attaining pupils. The provision for English is improving but recent developments have not yet had time to make a significant impact on pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

- 96) Attainment on entry to the school is variable between year groups; for example, last year's seven-year-old group entered the school with attainment in mathematics lower than the average results of local schools. The unique and often changing composition of year groups makes it difficult to compare the standards achieved by groups of pupils. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds standards were average. Similar school comparisons show performance to be well below average, including the proportion of pupils placed at the higher levels. In the year 2000 tests for eleven-year-olds standards were well above average and in line with the average of similar schools. Performance at the higher levels was above average. There is no pattern of difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Trends in attainment are difficult to identify with any degree of accuracy because of the changing nature of year groups; however, last year's performance was lower than the previous year. Attainment is set to rise again this year.
- 97) Inspectors found that because of the differences between year groups and better lesson planning, attainment is now above average for seven-year-olds and well above average for eleven-year-olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) also achieve well and by the time they are eleven are well represented in the higher levels of attainment of the National Curriculum. Of particular note is the curiosity pupils show during mathematical investigations. This is the case in all classes and the oldest junior pupils are reluctant to leave their investigations. During these explorations pupils come to lengthy and often complex solutions to problems, often at the expense of the easier paths. However, these complicated methods are due to their good levels of understanding about how the number system works and a thorough understanding of the arithmetical processes. These standards are higher than observed at the last inspection. Within the last few months a great deal of effort has helped promote a better use of information and communication technology (ICT) within mathematics. This is at the earliest stages of development and, although not yet at average levels, there are promising signs that the use of computers in mathematics is improving. Pupils are adept at using their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects; for instance, in science and geography when pupils are required to display data and read scales marked with negative numbers.
- 98) By the end of the infants pupils have made good progress and have built on their understanding of number. Six-year-old pupils show clear understanding that the order in which we add numbers does not affect the result. They create their own number stories using addition and subtraction. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language (EAL) who make up more than 60 per cent of the class, made very good progress in this lesson. More able pupils compared three, three digit numbers by looking carefully at the value of the numbers in

the hundreds, tens and units columns. They did this after working one or two examples with their teacher and then managed the tasks without their teacher's help as the remainder of the class was supervised. The teacher and the nursery nurse gave pupils of all levels of ability very good support as attainment was pushed and the lesson conducted at a brisk pace. Pupils were very responsive as a pebble was passed from child to child; they made up their own number sentences so that they arrived at the answer 5, some citing such examples as $50 - 45$. Patient and watchful care helped pupils with EAL to respond with correct answers using the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In a lesson for seven-year-olds, high standards of behaviour were encouraged by the teacher insisting that pupils listened to each other. Adding three numbers, for example $1+6+149$, pupils identified the method of adding 1 and 149 and then adding 6. In the main part of the lesson, pupils added numbers from throwing dice, added three numbers and looked for efficient methods and more able pupils added two digit numbers and were heard to say, 'This is stretching my brain!' All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with EAL have good levels of understanding about shape and measures, using standard units of measure in their practical work.

- 99) Progress continues to be good in the junior classes. In the class for eight-year-olds the pace of the lesson was satisfactory and pupils showed average levels of understanding of number and patterns. In this lesson too, pupils arrived at their own methods as they rounded numbers up to the nearest 10 and eagerly reported back the patterns they had discovered in the nine times table. In a lesson for nine-year-olds creative teaching methods ensured that pupils grasped the strategy of adding one to large numbers for speed and accuracy. Once the teacher was satisfied that pupils understood the concept, tasks were set which matched pupils' understanding, levels of accuracy and speed of working. This helped to maintain the brisk pace of the lesson and, as each pupil could select their own resources and opt for teacher support, they were encouraged to become familiar with their own learning needs. In a lesson for ten-year-olds, pupils gave reasons for selecting their own methods and could substantiate their choice. Again, understanding of computational methods was high and pupils were eager and keen to answer in the well-paced and fluid lesson. In the class for eleven-year-olds pupils more able children were encouraged to formulate and solve linear equations while others continue their use of brackets in computations. Pupils working in the middle team worked at National Curriculum levels above the average found in most schools and more able pupils worked at levels well above average levels. Pupils' books showed a good range of work, with investigations figuring highly and, for example, graphs plotted in four quadrants. This lesson was very well structured and required good support from other adults to help the teacher maintain the brisk pace of pupils' learning.
- 100) The overall quality of teaching is good and is effective because teachers plan different levels of work based on their knowledge of how well pupils have done in preceding lessons. These different levels of tasks help to challenge pupils. For example, in a lesson for eleven-year-olds the teacher planned different work for more able pupils during the oral starter to a lesson. This was highly effective. It meant that all members of the class were stretched and challenged and high expectations of thinking and work rate were set at the outset of the lesson. However, when formal recording is required, rather than note taking or informal calculations, teachers do not insist that pupils present their work clearly and well set out. This can lead to errors in calculations. Teachers have begun to set pupils individual targets to help them understand what they have to learn. Teachers tell pupils the aim for each lesson but in discussions pupils do not readily relate to targets beyond the immediate lesson. The range and quality of

planned investigations has improved since the last inspection. This encourages pupils to apply their reasoning skills and develop their own methods of calculating answers.

- 101) The senior managers and curriculum coordinator monitor the subject well and the leadership of the subject is good. Teaching is observed. A thorough analysis of last year's national test results, notably the results for seven-year-olds, resulted in changes to the curriculum and teaching to meet the identified shortfalls in attainment. The lesson plan format used in mathematics is a good model and could usefully be transferred to other subjects.

SCIENCE

- 102) In last year's National Curriculum teacher assessments of seven-year-olds standards were well below the national average. Standards of work seen for pupils who are now in Year 2 show improvement and standards are in line with national averages. The difference is due to better teaching and planning and variations in the abilities of the respective groups of pupils. Last year's Year 2 contained a higher percentage of pupils with special needs and English as an additional language (EAL). In last year's National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds standards were above the national average and comparable with those found in similar schools. Inspection evidence paints a similar picture of attainment for the pupils who are now in Year 6. This maintains the picture seen at the last inspection. Trends over the past four years have seen a slight increase. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. At both key stages, results in national tests vary from year to year because the nature of each year group changes as pupils move in and out of the school.
- 103) In both the infant and junior stages, pupils have a good general scientific knowledge and understanding and well developed scientific vocabulary. Their ability to apply this knowledge and understanding to investigative work is less well developed. Pupils have had few opportunities to plan their own investigations and follow their own lines of enquiry. In this aspect of their learning, pupils' achievements are not yet high enough. This was identified in both the original inspection in 1997 and the subsequent inspection in 1998. It is only over the past year that this issue has been successfully addressed both in teachers' planning and in classroom practice. Inspection evidence indicates a marked shift in the emphasis teachers give to these aspects of the subject.
- 104) By the end of the infants, pupils respond well to the suggestions about how to find things out and develop a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test. In a Year 2 lesson when investigating how different materials react when dropped from a height, pupils quickly realised that it was vital to drop them from the same height. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the needs of plants and animals, the properties of materials and physical processes. By the end of the juniors, pupils have developed the concept of a fair test well. In a Year 5 lesson where pupils were investigating whether sound travelled through materials, they quickly realised that it was important to use the same amount of the different materials to enclose the shaker. Scrutiny of pupils' books and discussion with pupils indicates that they have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. By the end of the juniors all pupils have a well-developed scientific vocabulary.
- 105) In both the infants and juniors, all pupils record their work in an appropriate range of ways including, charts, tables, drawings and labelled diagrams. The use of information

and communication technology, however, is limited and it makes an insufficient contribution to pupils' learning in science.

- 106) The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good in both the infant and junior classes. This represents an improvement since the previous inspections, particularly in the infants. Weaknesses in planning and insufficient support for pupils as they work individually or in groups have been successfully addressed. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in lessons and fully involved in investigations and discussion. This ensures that they make good progress. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject which enables them to develop subject specific vocabulary and ask good questions that encourage a thoughtful response. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher asked; 'Does the temperature of the water affect the rate at which salt dissolves?' In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher asked; 'Was what happened what you expected to happen?' The shift in emphasis by the teachers in their planning and delivery of investigative work has encouraged pupils to collaborate and co-operate more in their learning. Lessons are well organised and managed. In the infants different activities are prepared on the same theme and pupils move from one to the other. This is effective in maintaining a brisk pace to lessons and in keeping pupils' interest and motivation high. In the juniors there is more emphasis on class discussion before, during and after investigation. This is effective in building on pupils' good speaking and listening skills. Relationships are good at all stages and the enthusiasm of all the teachers is a key factor in pupils' learning.
- 107) There are still some areas that require improvement. In both the infant and juniors, the work of the higher attaining pupils does not always offer sufficient challenge. Teachers' expectations of what the higher attaining pupils might achieve are not always high enough. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers' expectations of the way work is presented are also not high enough. In about a quarter of lessons in the juniors, where teaching is not so effective, there is an imbalance between teachers' explanation, discussion and investigation and the pace of learning tails off. The use of information gained from pupil assessment during lessons is not built sufficiently into subsequent lesson planning and consequently the development of knowledge and skills from year to year is not optimised.
- 108) Management and co-ordination of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has been in post since Easter 2000 and has a clear understanding of how the subject needs to be developed. A good policy has been drawn up and an effective scheme of work ensures a consistency of approach both in what is taught and how key skills are developed. These are helping to ensure that pupils' learning builds well on what pupils already know, understand and can do. There is good monitoring of strengths and weaknesses in teachers' planning and pupils' work. For example, this has confirmed an under-emphasis of investigative science and highlighted the insufficient use of ICT. The issue with regard to investigative work is being successfully addressed and there are plans to increase the use of computers in the teaching of science.

ART AND DESIGN

- 109) Pupils' attainment in art and design is above average at the end of the infants and the juniors. Pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to explore media and design their work. There is a scheme of work, based on the local education authority scheme, which builds on previous learning and systematically develops techniques and skills. The co-ordinator for the subject is an art specialist and all the teaching observed during the inspection was at least good and often very good. Both standards and teaching have improved considerably since the inspection in 1997 when standards were below average and the learning lacked continuity, with some lessons taught unsatisfactorily.
- 110) The pupils in the infants were experimenting with mark making on fabric during this inspection. In one lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2 used good quality photographs of natural objects and looked at fabric design to experiment with pattern in their sketchbooks. In a previous lesson they had examined the effect of different media on paper and had explored patterns. Pupils translated the pictures they examined into interesting designs, demonstrating the ability to pick out pattern from pictures. For example, some produced accurate patterns reflecting a pineapple while others used spray, waves, tiles or scree to generate their designs. When using the three media they were given most chose appropriately, after prompts from the teacher, using fabric paint for large areas and crayon for the lines. The class produced good quality work as a result of the preparation they had had and the very good, precise teaching of skills. Pupils with English as an additional language received very good support and shared their home language vocabulary with others. A pupil with special needs as well as English as an additional language is the class expert in art. The teacher made sure that the class celebrated the pupil's work, making a major impact on his self-esteem.
- 111) By Year 4 pupils have gained considerable knowledge in colour blending. They have copied the skin colour of their partners and written the formula to reproduce it. Their sketchbooks show an awareness of the range of combinations needed. Very good teaching enabled the pupils to draw their partner's face with features positioned accurately. Again, the very good planning for the series of lessons is leading to good quality work. Pupils worked very hard during their afternoon of art. One pupil with special needs concentrated extremely well. The adults in the classroom gave him very good support, helping him to control his brush. His achievements were celebrated and he was very gratified. By Year 6 pupils interpret the designs of different artists and styles, including the work of Laura Ashley they have studied, to apply to card for impress printing. Their sketchbooks include studies in perspective, shadow and an analysis of the work of Henry Moore. The teacher had marked their artwork carefully, giving pupils helpful guidance as well as praising good work.
- 112) Art is well led. Displays around the school are of good quality, demonstrating a range of techniques including three-dimensional work. Pupils have used the work of artists such as Kandinsky and styles like Pop Art and Celtic design as a stimulus for their work. They have a good knowledge of European artists but there is a surprising lack of art from other cultures in school considering the rich mixture of cultures in the school population. A thriving art club run by parents gives pupils the opportunity to "work large" in the hall and the curriculum is enhanced by visits by professional artists and school exhibitions. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. The inclusion of artists from a wider range of cultures would improve its contribution still further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 113) The subject was not being taught at the time of the inspection as it alternates with art and design as part of the school's curriculum cycle. A scrutiny of teachers' plans, displays and discussions with pupils shows standards to be just average although improving since the implementation of a scheme of work which sets out the skills that pupils should learn. The curriculum and standards have improved since the last inspection.
- 114) Pupils understand how to cut materials although experience in resistant materials is limited. Older pupils know how to strengthen structures, reinforcing by using diagonals and brackets. This work was used making model shelters during a study of World War 2. These models were of satisfactory quality and were stable due to the use of the strengthening structures. This work was designed and planned and detailed the use of materials.
- 115) Younger pupils designed good quality repeating fabric prints and made cards which used levers to move parts of the design. Pupils understand how movement can be brought about and how fixings are important when making moving parts. Eleven-year-old pupils completed a thorough investigation and analysis of pupils' biscuit preferences. From this information they designed recipes, packaging and evaluated their work. Scripts for radio advertisements were completed and jingles were written using musical notation. This was a substantial project and pupils gained a great deal from the process. In this topic some pupils chose to use computers to good effect.
- 116) The curriculum for the subject is now satisfactory and the subject is well managed. The coordinator has good plans for staff training and further improvements. The switch from a knowledge-based set of experiences to those that emphasise skill development is appropriate and the draft policy gives helpful advice and support to teachers.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 117) Due to the way in which the school organises the teaching of history and geography in topic cycles, it was not possible to see any history lessons. In the previous inspection in 1997, the work seen in both subjects was judged to be satisfactory by the end of the infants and juniors although pupils' progress was uneven and generally unsatisfactory. The work seen during the inspection shows some improvement. Whilst the work seen in history and geography was average for seven-year-olds, it was above average for eleven-year-olds in history and average in geography. Improved teaching and better and more consistent team planning has led to more even progress in the development of key knowledge, skills and understanding in both subjects. Pupils who have English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is particularly marked when additional support is available.
- 118) In history, by the end of the infants, pupils develop a sound understanding of aspects of the past beyond living memory and some of the main events and people they have studied. For example, they know some of the key characteristics of the Roman period and make comparisons between a Celtic and Roman town. Higher attaining pupils use their writing skills effectively to write good accounts of an imaginary day in the life of a Roman slave. Pupils use non-fiction sources well to research the equipment needed by a Roman soldier. Artefacts from other periods are used well to stimulate enquiry as to what the period was like. In the juniors, pupils develop research skills well and by the end of the juniors, they have a good knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history of Britain and the wider world. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they have a

good knowledge of key features of World War Two such as rationing and evacuation. They are aware of the effects of these on the lives of ordinary people. Gender issues such as the role of women in the war are studied and give pupils a more balanced view of the period. Pupils are able to draw sensible conclusions from secondary sources such as maps and photographs, for example, when studying maps of German bombing targets in Britain they see the strategic pattern that emerges.

- 119) In geography, by the end of the infants, pupils describe the physical and human features of places and show a sound awareness of places beyond their own locality. They have a good understanding of how changes to the environment may affect people. In a topic using a fictional source, pupils in Year 1 and 2 understand that the building of a pier on a remote Scottish island will have different implications for different people. The higher and middle attaining pupils use their literacy skills well to write letters expressing opinions for and against the building of the pier. By the end of the juniors, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of places and environments in Britain and around the world. Pupils come from many different countries and bring first hand knowledge and insight to the work in geography. In studies of St Lucia, pupils know the similarities and differences in a range of physical and human features between the island and Britain. They use atlases, maps, photographs and books well to help them in a study of world weather trends and how various countries acquire their water supplies. They draw and use large-scale maps of the school to trace water supplies within the school
- 120) There is not enough evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in history. Scrutiny of pupils' work and current planning by the teachers indicates that it is at least satisfactory. Teaching and learning in the geography lessons seen was good in three of the four lessons seen and satisfactory in the other. Teachers have a secure knowledge of both subjects and this ensures that pupils' are helped to develop the correct technical vocabulary. Resources are used well in both subjects and add stimulation and interest to learning. Visits to places such as local museums and activity centres are used well to add a further dimension to pupils' learning. Theme days such as Roman day when pupils dressed as Romans, cooked food and performed dance of the period enhance and enrich learning experiences for the pupils. Drama and role play feature well in the work seen and impact well on pupils' learning and enjoyment. In a Year 4 class, for example, the teacher devised an imaginary visit to the island. Pupils dressed in holiday clothes, made their own passports and planned questions to ask the islanders when they arrived. There are some shortcomings in the teaching in both subjects. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and the use of information gained from pupil assessment during lessons is not built effectively into subsequent lesson planning. There is some evidence that pupils have used CD-ROMs to assist their work in history but overall computers are not used sufficiently to develop pupils' learning in the subjects. The work planned for the higher attaining pupils is not always sufficiently demanding.
- 121) Management of the subjects is good. The co-ordinator is responsible for both subjects and since the beginning of the academic year has revised the school policies and schemes of work. She has scrutinising teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work across the year groups. She is aware of the need to ensure that the development of key historical and geographical skills are not compromised when one is not the focus in the two-year cycle approach to planning. It is planned to identify, evaluate and address these in the pupils' work. For example, to see how the key geographical skill of mapping might be included in relevant work in other subjects. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to observe teaching in other classes in order to gain a clear overview of teaching and learning in other subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 122) Standards in ICT are below average at both seven and eleven although there have been improvements in the provision for the subject in the few weeks leading up to this inspection. A temporary grouping of computers now enables skills to be taught effectively and pupils' knowledge and understanding of the capabilities of ICT are rising rapidly. Standards at the last inspection were below average and the improvement of ICT facilities has been waiting for funding to become available and for other developments in the school development plan to take place. The recent improvements have brought about the teaching of a broader range of aspects of the ICT curriculum and the means by which pupils can be taught as a class and so learn at a faster rate. Before the development of the temporary suite each the limited access to computers meant that each class would take three weeks to learn a particular skill or concept. The school has well-developed plans to improve further the provision for ICT by building an arts and technology suite
- 123) Six-year-old pupils are taught important aspects of saving and deleting their work. They quickly learn how to open and close files, move between programmes and shut down computers. The lesson was carefully stepped to take pupils through the processes. Although the teaching space available is not ideal, pupils concentrated well as they learned the functions of the keyboard and the teacher made good connections between what was pressed and what appeared on the screen. The lesson finished well as the teacher used a keyboard to reinforce the learning points of the lesson. This good method of recapping and fixing learning ensured pupils understood that similar effects could be managed by taking different actions.
- 124) Teaching was very good and satisfactory in two lessons for ten and eleven-year-olds respectively. Teachers ensured that pupils quickly learned to use the facilities available when using a paint package. In these lessons there were good links to art when a Matisse collage was used as a stimulus. Pupils gained an understanding of the functions of the computer program as they attempted to carry out their teacher's instructions. In both lessons teachers set up the lesson well. Preparation was very good and enabled the teacher to carefully explain what actions should be taken and then for pupils to investigate discovering the capabilities of the software. Pupils are skilled at using the basic functions of many programs including word processing, art, databases and accessing information from CD-ROMs and the Internet. In the areas of control and modelling pupils' skills are not well developed nor do pupils use ICT sufficiently in other curriculum areas. Although teachers have not had access to the training that is planned they are gaining confidence when teaching the subject. The temporary suite is used very effectively and, as pupils' progress increases and the school is involved in the activities with the community, for example, in trialing web sites as in a recent project, more confidence is gained. The school has plans for further developments to its web site so that parents abroad can gain a more complete picture of the facilities the school has to offer.
- 125) The subject is managed very well and the coordinator is energetic and knowledgeable. A highly competent audit carried out by the coordinator and the governor who has oversight of this subject has resulted in a very good quality plan to enhance provision. Staff training has been planned and the acceleration of progress to meet the issues identified in the previous inspection should enable the school to meet the criteria it has set itself in the subject improvement plan.

MUSIC

- 126) Overall, standards in music were well below average at the time of the inspection in 1997. There has been considerable improvement over the last few years and standards are now in line with national expectations. The school has introduced a commercial scheme of work for music which helps teachers and enables pupils to build on their previous learning. Some more able pupils, who have access to the very good peripatetic instrumental tuition and the singing club run by a talented parent, achieve well. Instrumentalists regularly accompany the singing in assemblies, sight-reading the notation. The choir, consisting of pupils from the junior classes, confidently sings songs with complex rhythms. They harmonise accurately. There are about 35 pupils in this choir, which is an indication of their enthusiasm and commitment.
- 127) Pupils in Year 1 identify high and low pitch. The teacher has very high expectations and by the end of the lesson observed during the inspection, pupils identified pitch in male and female voices when speaking. This lesson, taught by the music co-ordinator, was planned very well. Pupils' skills improved considerably during the lesson. They enjoyed themselves and demonstrated well-established routines. "Freeze" from the teacher produced an instant response. A new pupil, with English as an additional language sat with his father who had been alongside him for the afternoon. By the end of the lesson he had moved to sit by the teacher and was joining in all the activities, learning the action song the class was singing. This is a testament to the support given to pupils new to the school and those with English as an additional language. The singing was lively and tuneful, more difficult than is usual for pupils in Year 1. All pupils in the infants sing enthusiastically in assemblies. Pupils from Year 2 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder.
- 128) Older pupils understand musical terminology such as "timbre" although they do not use it when describing the sounds they hear. They interpret symbols, closely matched to standard notation, that represent the length of each note and perform with reasonable accuracy. Through careful lesson planning, when evaluating their performance, pupils identified that some instruments do not produce a clear beat and are more suitable for sustained sound.
- 129) The teachers with a musical background taught the only class lessons observed during the inspection and the teaching was good or very good. The scheme of work ensures progression throughout the school and the combined singing sessions taken by the headteacher ensure that there is a challenging repertoire. Pupils have access to the music of a variety of western composers. The co-ordinator has identified the need to extend the collection to include music from other cultures and has already received funds from the parent teacher association to address this. Extra-curricular provision is good. The instrumentalists join together to form the school orchestra. Pupils enjoy performing and there is an annual school concert. The co-ordinator is particularly proud of a pupil with special needs who has developed self-esteem through trumpet playing. Parents are extremely supportive of the subject. Their enthusiasm has contributed to the increased profile of the subject. The provision for music makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 130) By the end of the infants and juniors, standards are similar to those expected. This represents improvement in the infants since the inspection in 1997 when standards

were below those expected for seven-year-olds. This is a result of better planning and teaching in this stage. In the juniors the picture remains largely the same, although planning has improved and there is a better balance between the different aspects of the subject. By the time they leave the juniors, most pupils are able to swim at least the required 25 metres. Only lessons in swimming, dance and games were seen during the inspection. No gymnastic or work on large apparatus was seen. The standards achieved by pupils who have English as an additional language are at least comparable with all other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in all activities, receive good support from teachers and support assistants and make comparable rates of progress to other pupils.

- 131) By the end of the infants, pupils perform a range of different movements showing good control and awareness of the space around them. They run, walk, jump and move using different pace and directions in response to instructions and music, for example in a lesson on dance. They are able to pick up features in the performance of others and improve their own performance as a result. Pupils know of the need to warm up appropriately at the beginning of sessions and are increasingly aware of the effects of physical activity on their bodies. By the end of the juniors, pupils are able to synchronise dance steps to clapping and taped music. They remember and follow a sequence well. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils practiced, improved and performed a Cumberland reel very well. The school has enjoyed success in sports competitions against other schools. In games, pupils in Year 6 show good ball control when moving a football at speed and develop a good awareness of basic attack and defence tactics involved in football. Girls are equally involved and have the opportunity to play football against other schools. About a third of the pupils achieve high standards in games and dance lessons.
- 132) In the one lesson seen in the infants, the quality of teaching and learning was good. In the four lessons seen in the juniors, teaching and learning were very good in one lesson, good in two and unsatisfactory in one. In both the infants and juniors, teachers generally ensure that pupils experience a good level of activity in lessons and this has a good impact on their learning. This is achieved by good organisation so that there is very little waiting between periods of activity. In the unsatisfactory lesson, efficient use of time was a weakness. Teachers are good observers of pupils' responses and give good guidance during the lessons, adjusting the task as necessary to improve the quality of learning. This was another weakness in the unsatisfactory lesson. Effective control is maintained throughout activities and good attention is given to health and safety. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and consequently pupils understand how they should behave in the hall and on the field. All teachers change for lessons and this sets the right example for the pupils. Lessons have a good structure with a warm-up activity, a skill session and cooling down activity. Apart from in swimming, insufficient use is made of assessment of pupils' learning to inform subsequent lesson planning.
- 133) Management of the subject is good. The coordinator has worked hard to improve standards and resources across the school. The Parents' Association has provided significant funds to develop resources and parents provide valuable support for extra-curricular activities. The scheme of work has been updated to address an over-emphasis on games' skills. The scheme is now more balanced and includes all aspects of the curriculum in equal measure. There has been no opportunity for the coordinator form a clear overview of teaching and learning through lesson observation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 134) Pupil's attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. The scheme of work used by the school combines the agreed syllabus with government guidance for the subject. The planning reflects the diversity of cultures and faiths within the school. The new scheme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education complements religious education. Only a few lessons were observed during the inspection and the quality of teaching varied between good and very good in most lessons. Standards in religious education teaching have improved considerably since the inspection in February 1997.
- 135) Pupils in Year 2 understand that there are special festivals associated with Christian worship and have a good knowledge of the symbols and artefacts that are associated with these festivals. In their lesson the pupils looked at Christian weddings and compared them with the ceremony in other faiths. They understood the significance of the ceremony and the common factor, the vows, which links all faiths. Pupils remembered their previous lesson and used their knowledge to devise questions, in mixed ability discussion groups, about Japanese weddings, having compiled a list of wedding vows. Pupils were very enthusiastic, their discussion was mature and relevant and they made very good progress in this lesson. Very effective teaching, for example, questioning the assumption that there is confetti at Japanese weddings, encouraged pupils to make their question very relevant.
- 136) Older pupils understand that the symbols related to faith have meanings and are used to support reflection, rituals and belief. Pupils in Year 5 made very good gains in their knowledge as they listened to and questioned a parent who is a Mongolian Buddhist. She and her son, a member of the class who was dressed traditionally, explained the meaning behind the wheel of life. Pupils listened intently as she discussed the root of suffering and then the eight-fold path to enlightenment. The teacher supported her well, summing up her teaching and allowing pupils to ask their prepared questions. The impact of this lesson, enhanced by artefacts and the burning of incense, enabled pupils to deepen their understanding of Buddhism and learn that there are different types of Buddhism with different practices. They understand that, for example, some faiths do not worship a god but are based on enlightenment but that living a good life is common to all faiths. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and all value their contribution to the subject. Their beliefs are respected and, in turn, they demonstrate a keen interest in the religions of others; for example, in one class, a Muslim pupil had done his own research into Buddhism. Pupils with special needs participate fully in the class discussions.
- 137) The subject co-ordinator has developed an interesting curriculum and the school makes very good use of its diversity of cultures and local places of worship. There is an appropriate range of resources and books to support the curriculum. It is evident from discussion with pupils that their understanding of the diversity of faiths is secure. The standard of discussion is very good, as is the use of artefacts and human resources. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to both consolidate their knowledge and extend their writing skills. There is very little written work for the subject, even in older pupils' work. The co-ordinator recognises that recording is an area for development.